## CHAPTER LIV

# AMERICA ENTERS THE WAR

AT the beginning of 1917, the entry of the United States into the War seemed more remote and improbable than at any time since the first outbreak of world hostilities.

*Aloofness from the conflict*

Although the bulk of public opinion in the States was all along pro-Ally, its attitude was one of detached and bored sympathy rather than of any strong desire to join in the conflict on our side. As the months of the War lengthened into years, and the struggle developed into a confusing scrimmage out of which nothing emerged but a growing mass of crushed, bruised and bloodstained humanity, pro-Ally sentiment tended to settle down resignedly into a rut of benevolent but horrified neutrality. America was prospering more and more by the conflict, but getting less and less reconciled to battening on the ghastly heap of bleeding horror. The best wanted peace as soon as a reasonably satisfactory one could be patched up.

*Presidential election*

The Presidential election at the beginning of November, 1916, emphasised this attitude, Woodrow Wilson secured his re-election on the if/"i?[1]" slogan that he was the man who kept America out of the European slaughter house. Theodore Roosevelt, the one leading figure in the States who was openly and

*Participation in 1647*